

Proposed Amendment to the Graceway Constitution
8/6/2020

Background:

This amendment originated with the Elder Board and was presented to the Combined Board on 8/11/20 where it was unanimously approved. Our Graceway Constitution requires further approval by at least a 2/3 majority of members present and voting at the business meeting where the amendment is adopted. This amendment will be on the agenda for our September business meeting to be held after the morning service on September 27, 2020.

Purpose:

The purpose of this amendment is to make the revisions necessary to allow for a situation in which the pastoral responsibilities and authority that we have previously vested in one man may be shared. These are some examples showing the wide range of situations:

- A Senior Pastor turning over responsibility and authority for a small part of the ministry to an Executive Pastor
- A Teaching/Preaching Pastor who does only that with an Executive Pastor who has authority and responsibility to run all the other ministries.

An attempt has been made to accommodate these varying combinations of responsibility and authority.

Preface:

This document contains only the paragraphs in the constitution containing the words pastor or pastoral. Each occurrence of these words is highlighted in yellow. Change tracking is used so that new text is shown underlined and in red. Deleted text is shown at the side.

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ARTICLE IV

MEMBERSHIP

2. Following the vote to recommend by the Board of Elders, the candidate shall be recommended to the church by written announcement. Church members having any objection to the recommendation shall be invited to express same to the Chairman of the Board of Elders within two weeks of the announcement. If any objections are made, the Elder Board must meet and either unanimously affirm or withdraw its recommendation. After a minimum of fourteen days from the written announcement, the candidate shall receive the right hand of fellowship by a Pastor. In the absence of a Pastor, this shall be an authorized officer chosen by the Board of Elders.

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ARTICLE V

OFFICERS

The Officers of this Church shall consist of:

1. Officers called by the membership

A. Senior Pastor

B. In a case where the typical senior pastor responsibilities and authority are shared, both the regular teaching/preaching pastor and an executive pastor will be called by the membership. See Article V, Paragraph 1 for a definition of executive pastor.

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ARTICLE VI

DUTIES OF OFFICERS AND BOARDS

1. **Pastor**. Where the term "Pastor" occurs in the remainder of this document, it can refer to either the senior pastor, the teaching pastor or the executive pastor. For purposes of this document, an executive pastor is one who is not the primary preaching/teaching pastor but exercises ultimate pastoral authority in at least some designated area of ministry. The division of responsibilities shall be as agreed by the pastors and approved by the Board of Elders. Where the term "designated pastor" is used it refers to the one who has been assigned that responsibility by the Elder Board approved pastoral agreement. A **Pastor** shall be in charge of all stated and regular services of the Church; he shall earnestly seek to promote the general spiritual welfare of the Church, in consultation with the Board of Elders; he shall administer the ordinances of the Church; he shall be an ex-officio member of all Boards and Committees with voting privileges.

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2. **Board of Elders**. It shall be the responsibility of the Board of Elders to assist the **pastors** in overseeing the spiritual welfare of the church. It shall be the responsibility of the Board of Elders to receive and distribute the benevolent fund. It shall also be the duty of the Board of Elders to receive and meet with all persons expressing a desire to join the Church as set forth in Article IV-1. The board of Elders shall be the nominating committee for those officers listed in Article V, Paragraph 2. The Board shall also act as a pulpit committee when need be. They shall meet whenever necessary or at the call of the senior or executive **Pastor**. The officers of the Board of Elders shall be a Chairman, a Vice Chairman, and a Secretary, and shall be elected for a term of one (1) year by the Board of Elders. The Chairman of the Board may approve checks and electronic payments or transfers when the amount is over \$10,000. Two-thirds (2/3) members shall constitute a quorum. The Elders may incur financial obligations not exceeding two thousand dollars (\$2,000) in completion of their assigned responsibilities. A member of the **pastoral staff** may become a member of the Board of Elders upon the unanimous invitation of the Board of Elders. The Chairman of the Board of Elders shall act as moderator of business meetings of the church. In the event he is not available, the vice-chairman of the Elder Board shall act as moderator in his place.

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3. **Board of Deacons**. It shall be the duty of the Board of Deacons to review an itemized report of expenditures and present an approved report to the Combined Board. They shall be in charge of property maintenance of both buildings and grounds. No obligation shall be incurred to spend over two thousand dollars

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(\$2,000) in one item without a majority vote of members of the Combined Board. They shall meet whenever deemed necessary or at the call of the senior or executive Pastor. The Officers of the Board of Deacons shall be a Chairman, a Vice Chairman, and a Secretary. The Chairman of the Board of Deacons may approve checks and electronic payments or transfers when the amount is over \$10,000. Two-thirds (2/3) members shall constitute a quorum.

4. Combined Board. The members of the Board of Elders and the members of the Board of Deacons comprise the Combined Board. It shall be the duty of the Combined Board to determine general policy of the Church. In so doing, it shall be the prerogative of the Combined Board to review all activities of the individual boards and to establish or dissolve such committees as are necessary to achieve the purpose of the Church. The Combined Board shall have authority to pay bills incurred. No obligation shall be incurred to spend over five thousand dollars (\$5,000) without special vote of the members of the Church. Spending of special designated gifts of up to \$50,000 is exempted from this requirement. The Chairman of the Combined Board shall appoint a committee composed of three (3) members of the Church to conduct a financial review. It shall be the duty of this committee to review the records of the Church Treasurer and Financial Secretary, and the records of the Treasurers of any organizations of the Church designated by the Combined Board. The committee may, if authorized by the Combined Board, engage a qualified accountant to complete some or all of the review or to complete an audit. In that case it will be the duty of the financial review committee to review the results of the accountant. Reviews will be completed at least once a year and audits at least each seven years or more frequently if directed by the Combined Board. Motions passed by a majority vote of the members of the Combined Board cannot be changed by the individual Boards of Elders or Deacons. Members of the Combined Board shall meet monthly or at the call of the senior or executive Pastor or Chairman of the Combined Board. A member of the Combined Board who shall, without cause, fail to be in attendance at three consecutive regular monthly meetings shall be removed automatically from the Combined Board and his elected office. The Chairman of the Board of Elders shall be ex-officio Chairman of the Combined Board. The Chairman of the Board of Deacons shall be ex-officio Vice Chairman of the Combined Board. The Chairman of the Combined Board shall appoint a member of the Combined Board to serve as Secretary of the Combined Board. Two thirds (2/3) members shall constitute a quorum.

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ARTICLE VIII

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

6. A majority vote of the membership present shall be required for the election of all Officers and business of the Church, unless as in the case of **Pastors**, otherwise stated.

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11. Offices becoming vacant during the year shall be filled by appointment by the Board of Elders except that Elders and Deacons will only be appointed when the remaining number falls below the constitutional minimum and a **pastor who is required to be called** will not be appointed. All such appointed terms shall end at the next annual church business meeting.

ARTICLE XI

CHURCH DISCIPLINE

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B. If the accused will not hear the brother accuser, the problem should be presented to the Board of Elders or **the designated Pastor** who will delegate two Elders or one Elder and the **designated Pastor** to inquire into the matter as a witness to establish the facts. He shall be exhorted to make right the wrong done to his brother.

C. If he will not hear the representatives from the Board of Elders, the matter shall be presented to the Church at a meeting consisting only of members and it shall be decided by the collective body of members what the final outcome shall be. If in the minds of the Church, the person is guilty of the accusation after having heard the testimony, a representative of the Church, consisting of the **designated Pastor** and Elder and another member, will contact the party on behalf of the Church.

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3. In the event a member is involved in false doctrine, not adhering to the Church doctrinal statement or principles as set forth in Article IV-4, and the issue involved is not between two members but between the accused and the Church collectively, the accused shall be brought before the Elders and presented with all the questions asked a prospective member, including Article IV-4 of the Constitution. If the answer of the accused is different from those previously made or principles set forth in said Constitution, he shall be warned and asked to correct his belief. If he fails to do this within two weeks with the help of the designated Pastor or Elders, he or she will be asked to resign. If this is refused, the members of the Church will by a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of members present vote his automatic dismissal.

ARTICLE XIII

PASTORS (Senior, Teaching/Preaching or Executive)

1. A Pastor shall be a man whose ordination and educational qualifications are satisfactory to the Board of Elders, and who shall sign and abide by the doctrinal statement (Article III) and Constitution of the Church and shall not belong or be in sympathy with any organization whose practices and beliefs are contrary to those held by the Church. He shall serve for an indefinite period.
2. When a vacancy shall occur in the Pastoral Office, the Board of Elders shall act as a pulpit committee. The Combined Board of Elders and Deacons shall have the power to interview a candidate for the Pastorate. After an affirmative three-fourths (3/4) decision of the Combined Board, they shall recommend the candidate to the membership for their approval.
3. A two-thirds (2/3) majority of the membership present at a specially called meeting shall be necessary for the selection of a Pastor. Notice of such meeting shall be announced orally at both Lord's Day services and members notified in writing preceding the meeting.

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4. An Assistant **Pastor** shall be chosen by the **designated Pastor** subject to approval of the Board of Elders and the Board of Deacons or relieved by the **designated Pastor**, subject to approval by the Board of Elders.

5. If at any time the relations between **a Pastor** and Congregation becomes such as to be detrimental to the welfare of the Church, the relationship may be terminated by the membership in ninety (90) days from the date of the notice of intention, or in a shorter period of time, if it be mutually agreed upon. The Board of Elders shall have authority to consider the matter and make recommendations to the Congregation, but it shall require a two-thirds (2/3) vote of members present at a specifically called meeting to dismiss the **Pastor**. Notice of such meeting shall be announced orally at both services on the Lord's Day, and members notified in writing preceding the meeting.

6. If at any time **a Pastor's** personal belief, preaching or teaching, in the judgment of a majority of the Board of Elders, shall not be in full accord with the doctrinal statement of this Church (Article III), his services as **Pastor** shall be terminated by the Congregation in ninety (90) days, or in a shorter period of time, if it be mutually agreed upon, following a specially called meeting at which his dismissal has been requested by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of members present. Notice of such meeting shall be announced orally at both Lord's Day services, and members notified in writing preceding the meeting.

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